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**STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

MEDIA RELEASE

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE
REPORTS TO GOVERNOR ON OCTOBER STORM**

Montpelier, VT – On October 25 and 26, 2005, a severe snow storm struck nearly the entirety of Vermont resulting in numerous and lengthy electric power outages. In response to these power outages, Governor Jim Douglas called on the Department of Public Service “to conduct a thorough review of the root causes of [these] outages, evaluate the response by the utilities and the state, and recommend actions that may be necessary to alleviate the effects of future outages.”

The Department of Public Service has sent to Governor Douglas a preliminary report that addresses the weather event of October 25 and 26 in context, examines the root causes for the severity of the resulting power outages, lists elements comprising superior utility response to such events, and evaluates the effectiveness of the communication between the utilities and their customers during this event. This preliminary report also provides initial observations regarding the effectiveness of Vermont’s utilities’ responses to the storm and the role of state government in such events. DPS Commissioner David O'Brien said of the analysis, “We understand this was an unusual storm, both in terms of its timing early in the year and its reach across the state. However, when Vermonters are without power for a long period we must be assured that every step was taken to get them back online. We view maintaining electric service to residents during the winter months to be central to the health and welfare of our communities.”

The Department is currently completing a more in-depth analysis. A final report addressing the effectiveness of the utilities’ responses, the role of state government in such events, and lessons learned will be issued in first quarter 2006.

The preliminary report is posted on the DPS website at:
<http://publicservice.vermont.gov>

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